

## **Policy for APHIS Supervisors, Managers, and Executives**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) (#4)**

**Question:** I have heard rumors that now that supervisors are required to have a 360-degree assessment completed, that management intends to use the data for performance appraisals as well as for training and development. Can you confirm this rumor?

We absolutely do NOT intend to use the feedback from the 360-degree assessments for performance appraisals. The current system is designed to keep the feedback data totally confidential to the employee. Only he/she can decide if he/she wants to share the data with others, i.e., a supervisor (this is recommended, but is certainly not required). It is true that some organizations in the private sector especially are starting to use this feedback data for performance, but when this is done the questionnaires need to be structured differently, different questions need to be asked, different kinds of feedback systems need to be in place, etc. There are no plans for APHIS to use this data for anything other than employee development opportunities.

**Question:** I'm not sure I understand the 5-year requirement that is laid out in the APHIS Directive covering Employee Development and the need to have 360-degree assessments completed. Do I have five years from the time my program initiates the new multilevel performance appraisal system to get mine done? How are new supervisors treated? Can you explain this for me?

Certainly. Every APHIS supervisor, manager and executive is to have a 360-degree assessment completed at least once every five years, and that the data from that assessment is used to form that employee's non-technical training and development direction for the next five years, through the use of an Individual Development Plan (IDP), or Learning Contract.

Each Program is adopting or beginning to use the new multilevel appraisal system at different times over the next year or so. Beginning with that date or before, each supervisor, manager and executive should complete a 360-degree assessment within the following 12 months or appraisal cycle. That will set the stage for that employee's development and training for the following five years. If you find that an employee has recently completed a multilevel (or 360-degree) assessment, say within the last couple of years, he/she is not required to do another one until five years from the date of the last one. The data from the earlier assessment should be used as the basis for that person's development for the next three years or so. Should that person's supervisor want a new assessment done however, a new one should be completed. New supervisors, managers or executives should complete an assessment within their first year of that new assignment, again, so that their non-technical development is shaped by the results of that assessment.

**Question:** Which assessment should I take?

Each contractor providing an assessment was screened and then interviewed in-depth by the Training and Development Branch, ESD. All contractors selected have a quality product and would be most happy to work with you in whatever way necessary to best meet your needs. Costs vary depending on the contractor selected as well as the method you can use to complete the survey (i.e., paper forms, diskette, or web site) so you can use those two items to help you make a choice, if you'd like. You might want to call several of the contractors to see who you feel the most comfortable with and who can best meet your needs time wise. Also, employees are not limited to just the contractors identified. For example, if an employee enrolls in a special course offered by an outside vendor and that course/program utilizes a multilevel or 360-degree assessment, the data from that assessment can also be used to direct that employee's development.

**Question:** What should I do with my feedback report?

The assessment feedback is for your information and gives you a base on which to determine where personal development is needed as well as where your strengths lie. It is advisable to share the 360-degree results (at least in a general way) with your supervisor so that he/she can readily see what training and development is needed, how your strengths can be more fully utilized, and how others view your strengths. That way, both you and your supervisor can plan together the training that will be of most benefit to you.

**Question:** Regarding Dr. Dehaven's recent memo which introduces the EDLC, there is a reference in the last paragraph that program's should be spending between 2% and 4% of salaries on non-technical training and development for employees each year. Does this mean just salaries (which is BO 1100) or does it include "benefits" (which is BO 1200)?

The 2% - 4% range is intended to include the total for both salaries and benefits.